

D1  
CONT. polypeptides or peptides that nevertheless include such coding regions or can encode biologically functional equivalent proteins, polypeptide or peptides that have variant amino acids sequences.

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Support for this amendment, directed to correcting a minor typographical error, is found in numerous places in the specification, such as the second full paragraph of Page 50.

Per the Examiner's request, please also replace the first full paragraph on Page 28 (from Lines 4-11) with the following paragraph:

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D2 Examples of *atonal*-associated include but are not limited to *Math1* (mouse atonal homolog 1), *Cath1* (chicken atonal homolog 1), *Hath1* (human atonal homolog 1), and *Xath1* (Xenopus atonal homolog 1). Such examples are represented in SEQ ID NO:1 through SEQ ID NO:66, although others very likely exist in related organisms. A skilled artisan is cognizant of means to identify such sequences which have significant similarity, such as searching database collections of nucleic and amino acid sequence located on the World Wide Web.

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#### In the Claims

✓  
Please cancel claims 49, 120, and 122 without prejudice and without acquiescence. Applicants reserve the right to pursue these claims in future prosecution.

Please amend the following claims:

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D2 Sub F1 40. (Amended Once) A method of generating hair cells for an animal, comprising delivering a therapeutically effective amount of an *atonal*-associated nucleic acid sequence to a cell of said animal, wherein hair cells develop in said animal and wherein said *atonal*-associated nucleic acid sequence encodes a polypeptide that has hair cell generating activity and has at least about 80% identity to about 20 contiguous residues of SEQ ID NO:58.

41. (Amended Once) The method of claim 40, wherein said *atonal*-associated nucleic acid sequence is *Math1*.